Understanding Humanitarian Work Psychology through Case Studies and Student Opportunities

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Purpose of Symposium

1. Introduce Humanitarian Work Psychology (HWP).
2. Illustrate how I-O can be applied to pro-social issues.
3. Discuss future directions and opportunities for HWP.
I-O Psychology

- Long established in business, government, military.
- Less common to aid and development world.
- Carr (2007): Often responsive and adaptive to its social and economic context, though sometimes as a servant of power rather than powerlessness.
- Conspicuously missing from 11th European Congress of Psychology’s strand on Peace, Human Rights and Psychology.
I-O Psychology

- Need to view I-O from a broad vantage point that includes socially responsible goals.

“The world can no longer ignore the importance of social capital and social responsibility as an indicator of organizational and country success.”

--Anonymous Reviewer
I-O Psychology

- Clearly, some individuals doing important “pro-social I-O.” But:
  - Often discrete and disconnected efforts.
  - Lacking a collective and strategic aim.
- Need broader participation of larger I-O community.
  - Student participation is especially important.
Enter: Humanitarian Work Psychology (HWP)

- I-O with a pro-social edge.
- Researching and applying I-O in humanitarian areas, such as poverty reduction. For example:
  - Focuses internally on employees and organizations and externally on alignment with the local community.
- Steering Committee: Global Task Force on HWP.
  - Broad representation of low- to high-income countries.
Potential Gains for I-O

- Strategically carving out a role in the humanitarian work domain will enable:
  - An increase in I-O’s impact.
  - Better alignment among our values, ethics, and profession.
  - New settings in which to collect data and test generalizability of theories and best practices.
  - Opportunities for service learning and internships.

**Service Learning**
A method of teaching, learning and reflecting that combines academic classroom curriculum with meaningful service.
HWP In Action: The Present And Future

1. Ishbel McWha, Massey University
   • *I-O Psychology and Poverty Reduction: Putting Ideas into Practice*

2. Sarah Glavey, Trinity College Dublin
   • *Humanitarian Work Psychology: Addressing a Need*

3. Karen Cheng, Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science
   • *Development Aid in Sub-Saharan Africa: An I-O Psychology Perspective*

4. Jeffrey Godbout, University of Baltimore
   • *Opportunities & Networks for Students Interested in HWP*

5. You
   • “We encourage submissions in which diverse and novel perspectives are presented, including sessions in which the audience plays the role of discussant.”